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STAR WARS
DARK EMPIRE II
6 OF 6

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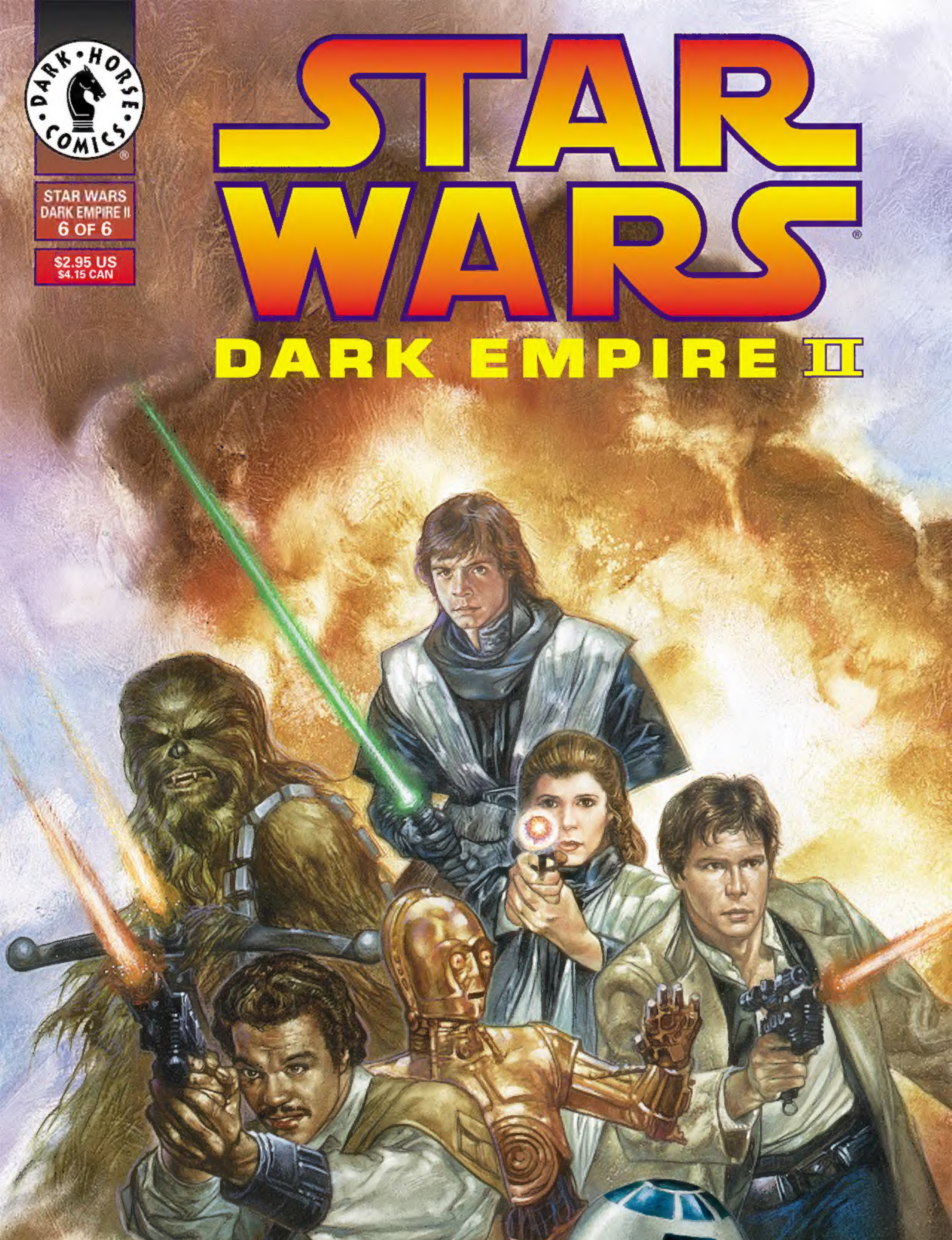
STAR WARS®

DARK EMPIRE II



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STAR WARS®

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Hand of Darkness

As Lando Calrissian's Viper Automadon war droids attack the Emperor's citadel on Byss, they are met by an army of monstrous creatures bent on destruction.

The war droids are no match for the Emperor's dark-side monsters, and soon the Rebels are pinned down amidst the ruins of their attack.

But Salla Zend and Shug Ninx pull together a group of smugglers to come to the aid of the Rebels. Manning fast-armed freighters, the spacers hold the dark-side beasts at bay long enough for Lando's crew to scramble aboard.

Across the galaxy, Luke Skywalker, Kam Solusar, and the young Jedi Knights Jem and Rayf Ysanna head for the Alliance command base on the pinnacled fifth moon of Da Soocha.

As Luke's ship, the *Jedi Explorer*, emerges from hyperspace, a light-speed torpedo fired from the Emperor's new Galaxy Weapon emerges near them, heading straight for Pinnacle Base.

Guessing the projectile's purpose, Luke tries to shoot it down—but the torpedo's shields hold and it strikes the Rebel moon with a planet-shattering blast.

Elsewhere, the *Millenium Falcon*, repaired by antique Ganathan technology, arrives at a tiny settlement on exotic New Alderaan. There, Han and Leia's twin children, Jacen and Jaina, have been secreted since birth from the prying eyes of the Emperor. . .

HNWARROWW!

BETTER GET USED TO HAVIN' YOUR *FUR* PULLED, CHEWIE--KIDS *LOVE* BIG, HAIRY UNCLES!

HAN SOLO AND CHEWBACCA ENJOY A PEACEFUL AFTERNOON WITH HAN AND LEIA'S TWIN CHILDREN, *JACEN* AND *JAINA*, ON AN UNCHARTED WORLD, CODE-NAMED *NEW ALDERAAN*.

THE HUMBLE DWELLINGS OF THE ISOLATED SETTLEMENT CONCEAL A LARGE UNDERGROUND STORAGE AND TECHNICAL COMPLEX COMPLETE WITH HIGH-TECH DEFENSE WEAPONRY.

IT IS A TIME OF RETREAT FOR THE SOLOS, AS LEIA AWAITS THE BIRTH OF HER *THIRD* CHILD.

TOGETHER WITH HER LIFELONG FRIEND *WINTER*, LEIA STROLLS THROUGH THE REBEL VILLAGE.

IN OTHER TIMES, LEIA AND WINTER WOULD BE OVERJOYED TO SEE EACH OTHER AFTER A LONG SEPARATION... BUT TODAY MORE SERIOUS MATTERS WEIGH ON THEIR HEARTS.

SOMETHING STRANGE IS GOING ON, LEIA.

ALL THE ALLIANCE RADIO CHANNELS ARE SILENT... AND MAJOR NTTHAN'S *SUPPLY SHIP* IS OVERDUE... HE'S *ALWAYS* ON TIME.

I CAN TRY TO SIGNAL HIM, BUT BECAUSE OF THE JEDI CHILDREN, WE *NEVER* TRANSMIT FROM NEW ALDERAAN.

ABOUT AN HOUR AGO... I FELT A GREAT *DISTURBANCE* IN THE FORCE.

I WONDER IF WE SHOULD HAVE STAYED AT *PINNACLE BASE* UNTIL LUKE RETURNED FROM *OSSUS*?

HE WENT TO INVESTIGATE THE *JEDI RUINS* THERE -- AND WE'VE HEARD *NOTHING* FROM HIM.

OOOH... SOMETHING'S UP, *THAT'S* FOR SURE.

HERE COMES YOUR FRIEND, *BRAND*. HE SEEMS TO BE IN A RUSH!

EVERYBODY BETTER GET UNDER COVER!

AN *UNIDENTIFIED SHIP* HAS ENTERED THE HIGH ATMOSPHERE... IT'S HEADING *STRAIGHT* FOR THIS SETTLEMENT!

WE WON'T KNOW IF IT'S ONE OF *OURS* UNTIL IT'S IN FIRING RANGE... ALL ITS SENSOR AND COMM-SYSTEMS ARE *MUTED*.

THAT'S PROPER NEW ALDERAAN APPROACH PROCEDURE, BRAND.

BUT THIS SHIP IS TOO *SMALL* TO BE OUR SUPPLY SHIP. MAYBE IT'S AN *ENEMY*... WHO *SHOT HIM DOWN!*

NO... EVERYTHING'S ALL RIGHT... I CAN *SENSE* THE PILOT...

IT'S LUKE.

A GRIM COMPANY OF JEDI EMERGE FROM THE *JEDI EXPLORER.*

YOUR CHILDREN! HEALTHY... AND *ALIVE!*

WHAT'S GOING ON, LUKE? SOMETHING *TERRIBLE* HAS HAPPENED, HASN'T IT?

YOU GUYS LOOK LIKE YOU'VE SEEN THE GHOST OF THE *EMPEROR* OR SOMETHIN'!

WE'VE JUST COME FROM PINNACLE BASE. THE MOON HAS BEEN *COMPLETELY DESTROYED.*

ALL THE LEADERS OF THE ALLIANCE ARE *DEAD.*

BAST CASTLE, ON THE PLANET VJUN.

ONCE LORD VADER'S PRIVATE REFUGE, THE REMOTE FORTRESS IS NOW THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE EMPEROR'S ELITE WARRIORS-- HIS "DARK JEDI" AS HE CALLS THEM.

BAST CASTLE...THIS IS IMPERIAL SHUTTLE TRIDIUS YOU ARE ORDERED TO MAKE READY TO RECEIVE YOUR EMPEROR!

DEEP IN THE DARK-SIDE STRONGHOLD, AN ALIEN REBEL PILOT UNDERGOES QUESTIONING BY KVAG GTHULL AND HIS DARKSIDER COHORTS.

HE IS MAJOR NTTHAN, WHOSE SUPPLY SHIP WAS CAPTURED IN AN UNCHARTED REGION OF SPACE.

INCREASE THE AMPLITUDE!

THIS REBEL WILL TELL US THE EXACT LOCATION OF THE BASE HE IS SUPPLYING.

N-N-NEVER. I'LL...NEVER... TALK.

NYYYAAAHHH!

THE INTERROGATION OF MAJOR NTTHAN IS ENTERING ITS TWELFTH HOUR. EVEN A PILOT TWICE AWARDED FOR EXCEPTIONAL BRAVERY CAN ONLY TAKE SO MUCH...

EMPEROR PALPATINE HIMSELF HAS COME TO BAST CASTLE WITH HIS NEWLY EMPOWERED WARRIORS, XECR NIST AND TEDRYN-SHA, TO TAKE COMMAND OF HIS ELITE FORCE.

NIST... THERE'S A STATUE OF LORD VADER! THIS USED TO BE HIS CASTLE!

GTHULL! HAS THE PRISONER REVEALED THE WHEREABOUTS OF THE JEDI CHILDREN YET?

YES, EXCELLENCY!

THE REBEL HAS TOLD EVERYTHING. WE HAVE THE LOCATION OF A SAFEHOLD WORLD, CODE-NAMED NEW ALDERAAN.

THE REB'S AN HONEST MAN... THE TORTURE DROID'S SENSORS INDICATE THE SCUM TOLD US THE TRUTH.

GOOOD. NOW THAT THE REBEL ALLIANCE IS SHATTERED, SKYWALKER WILL GO STRAIGHT TO HIS SISTER.

SOLUSAR WILL BE WITH HIM... AND ANY OTHER COWARDLY JEDI THAT SKYWALKER HAS MANAGED TO FIND.

WHAT ARE YOU ADMIRING, NIST? SEDRISS ERECTED THAT STATUE -- I WANT IT REMOVED.

BRING THESE MEN TO ATTENTION!

AS MAJOR NTTHAN IS DRAGGED OFF TO HIS CELL, THE EMPEROR ANNOUNCES HIS NEXT MOVE.

I CAN OBLITERATE THEIR HIDDEN REFUGE WITH A *SINGLE PROJECTILE* FROM MY NEW GALAXY WEAPON... BUT HOW THEN WILL I OBTAIN THE JEDI *CHILDREN*?

NIST--ARE YOU READY TO ACCOMPLISH WHAT YOUR PREDECESSOR *SEDRISS* COULD NOT?

IT SHALL BE DONE, YOUR EXCELLENCE. WE *SHALL* BRING YOU THE CHILDREN...

...AND WE WILL CAPTURE *SKYWALKER* AND *ALL* HIS ACCOMPLICES.

BOOTS REVERBERATE ON ANCIENT STONE AS THE *SEVEN DARKSIDERS* LOSE NO TIME IN MOUNTING THEIR GLEAMING *HOWLRUNNER* ATTACK SHIPS.

EMPEROR PALPATINE FEELS A DEEP AND ABIDING SATISFACTION AS THESE WARRIORS, EACH A LIVING EXTENSION OF HIS POWER, TAKE TO THE SKIES.

BY THE DARKNESS THAT I AM, THE TIME I HAVE LONGED FOR HAS *FINALLY COME*.

THE *END* OF THE JEDI KNIGHTS... I CAN *TASTE* IT!

THERE WILL BE NO ONE LEFT TO OPPOSE MY *WILL*!

NEW ALDERAAN.

THE JEDI ARE STILL IN SHOCK OVER THE DEATHS OF THE ALLIANCE LEADERS... BUT THE TRAINING OF THE *NEXT GENERATION* MUST GO FORWARD--!

RAYF... JEM... *MASTER YODA* TAUGHT ME THIS SKILL, MANY YEARS AGO.

ARE YOU READY TO FINISH LIFTING THAT *HEAVY STONE* WITHOUT ME?

ALL RIGHT, BRAND... IT WEIGHS A *LOT*... BUT WE'VE *GOT* IT!

KROVA MAKAO!

AS THE TWO YOUNG JEDI CONCENTRATE, THE *HUGE STONE* SETTLES INTO PLACE ATOP ANOTHER BOULDER.

T'FONN PTUNAB! IT WAS *EASY!* WE USED TO DO THIS WITH SMALLER ROCKS ON *OSSUS!*

AND NOW YOU KNOW, THE *SIZE* AND *WEIGHT* OF AN OBJECT DOESN'T MATTER TO THE *FORCE!*

YES... EVEN *VIMA* CAN LIFT THE STONE! AGE MATTERS *NOT!*

RAYF AND JEM ARE REALLY *GOOD* ... VERY OPEN TO THE FORCE.

I REMEMBER YODA TOLD ME, "ALWAYS WITH YOU IT *CAN'T* BE DONE..."

WITH JEM AND RAYF, ALWAYS IT *CAN* BE DONE!

LATER, THE JEDI MEET IN A SUB-SURFACE BRIEFING ROOM, WHERE A SCANNER PROJECTS *HOLO-IMAGES* EMBOSSED INTO AN *ANCIENT JEDI BOOK*.

JEM AND I FOUND THIS BOOK IN THE *JEDI LIBRARY* ON OSSUS...

IT CAN TEACH US ABOUT *BATTLE MEDITATION*...A SKILL THAT WAS USED BY THE JEDI IN *ANCIENT* TIMES.

WHAT DID THEY DO-- STOP FIGHTING AND GET ALL *DREAMY* WHEN THE COMBAT GOT TOO FIERCE?

HAN...! BATTLE MEDITATION WAS A *GREAT* JEDI POWER!

WE EACH NEED TO LEARN *ALL* THE ANCIENT JEDI SKILLS.

WITHOUT THE ALLIANCE LEADERS, OUR WORK WILL BE *TWICE* AS DIFFICULT.

WE'VE GOT TO CONTACT *LANDO* AND *WEDGE* AND TELL THEM TO REGROUP WITH US... IF THEY'RE STILL ALIVE!

I WANT TO SIGNAL THEM *RIGHT AWAY*... EVEN IF IT MEANS BETRAYING THE *LOCATION* OF THIS BASE TO THE EMPIRE!

LISTEN, THERE'S NO POINT IN TAKIN' A CHANCE THE EMPIRE'S *SCANNERS* WILL PICK UP A SIGNAL FROM NEW ALDERAAN.

CHEWIE AND I WILL HEAD FOR *DEEP SPACE*, SEND A MESSAGE TO LANDO'S WAR DROID TEAM--

WHUARRN HNWARRN!

THAT'S RIGHT, CHEWIE. I DON'T LIKE THE *FALCON'S* MODIFICATIONS EITHER... BUT SHE'LL STILL *FLY*.

AS EVENING COMES TO NEW ALDERAAN, HAN SOLO AND CHEWBACCA DEPART FOR SPACE TO ESTABLISH COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE *BYSS COMMANDO MISSION*.

LUKE AND JEM YSANNA FIND A MOMENT TO THEMSELVES.

MORE AND MORE LUKE FEELS DRAWN TO JEM--HER YOUTHFUL OPTIMISM LIFTS HIS SPIRITS FROM THE IMMENSE BURDENS OF A *JEDI MASTER*.

HAN'S *LUCKY*...HE'S GOT A FAMILY.

I'VE BEEN FIGHTING THE EMPIRE HALF MY LIFE... I'VE HAD NO TIME FOR ORDINARY...FRIENDSHIPS.

HAN AND LEIA ARE REBELS TOO... THAT DIDN'T STOP THEM FROM FINDING EACH OTHER.

THAT'S... TRUE.

I HAVE TO ADMIT... YOU'RE *VERY* SPECIAL TO ME, JEM.

WHAT BEGAN ON OSSUS HAS GROWN STRONGER WITH EACH PASSING MOMENT.

THEIR HEARTS BRIGHT WITH WAVES OF UNEXPECTED HAPPINESS, THE TWO JEDI BECOME OBLIVIOUS TO EVERYTHING AROUND THEM...

...AS SILENT, SWIFT SHADOWS MOVE TOWARD THEM ACROSS THE GLEAMING LAKE!

AS THE HOUR GROWS LATE, LUKE AND JEM RETURN TO THEIR SEPARATE QUARTERS.

THANKS, CE-3K. I'M REALLY EXHAUSTED FROM THE TRIP. I'VE GOT A *LOT* TO THINK ABOUT.

THIS *NEW HAND* THE EMPEROR GAVE ME HASN'T WORKED RIGHT SINCE I LEFT BYSS... I'LL HAVE TO ADJUST IT IN THE MORNING.

VERY GOOD, MASTER LUKE. I'LL HAVE YOUR *TOOLS* READY WHEN YOU AWAKEN.

HIS JEDI SENSES DULLED BY FATIGUE, LUKE DRIFTS INTO UNEASY SLEEP. FEELINGS OF DREAD GNAW AT THE EDGES OF HIS AWARENESS. HE CAN DIMLY SENSE *DARK SHAPES* MOVING IN THE FORCE.

LUKE HAS BEEN CAUGHT UP IN THE *GALACTIC STRUGGLE* FOR HALF A LIFETIME... A WAR OF BLOODSHED AND FIERCE WEAPONRY... A WAR FOR HIS MIND, HIS HEART... AND HIS *SPIRIT*.

IN THE YEARS SINCE THE DEATH OF HIS FATHER, MANY OF LUKE'S NIGHTS HAVE BEEN HAUNTED WITH VISIONS OF THE CONFLICTS OF THE PAST...

THIS NIGHT ON THE PEACEFUL SANCTUARY WORLD IS NO EXCEPTION.

BUT THE EMPEROR HAS LEARNED THE LOCATION OF NEW ALDERAAN -- AND A CLANDESTINE ATTACK OF *SCARAB DROIDS* IS ABOUT TO TURN SLEEP INTO *DEATH!*

AS THE POISON-BEARING DROIDS FIND THEIR QUARRY, THEIR LITTLE SENSORS HUM AND CLICK, SEEKING A PLACE TO BEGIN THEIR EVIL WORK.

AT THAT MOMENT, LUKE'S AGITATED DREAMS ERUPT INTO *NIGHTMARE!*

THE DARK SIDE HAS ALREADY *WON*, YOUNG SKYWALKER.

WHY DELUDE YOURSELF...YOU *KNOW* YOU BELONG TO ME.

FATHER... SON...ARE NOT *TWO*...

...*THEY ARE ONE!*

NOOOOO! THAT'S NOT TRUE! I'M NOT VADER!

THIS IS ONLY A DREAM...CREATED BY YOUR DARK-SIDE MAGIC!

YOU'RE ALIVE AGAIN, AREN'T YOU...? SEDRISS TOLD ME...

BUT SEDRISS IS GONE, PALPATINE. THE JEDI KNIGHTS ARE GOING TO OVERCOME ALL YOUR EVIL PLANS!

ON THE *CONTRARY*, MY FRIEND. IT IS *I* WHO HAVE WON... AS *YOU* ARE ABOUT TO LEARN!

NO... NO... THAT CAN'T BE... I...

AAAAAAAH--

N-NYAAAAA!

THE POISON WILL WORK QUICKLY. TAKE HIM, MORDI!

YES, TEDRYN!

JEM'YSANNA AND LEIA HAVE BOTH BEEN AWAKENED BY LUKE'S CRIES!

LUKE!

BY THE DARK SIDE, TEDRYN-- MORE JEDI!

BUT THEY ARE ONLY WOMEN!

VARDNA MOJAYA! YOU'VE HURT LUKE!

NNYUUNH--!

DARK JEDI KRDYS MORDI LEARNS TO HIS REGRET THAT JEDI WOMEN HAVE ALWAYS BEEN FEARLESS COMBATANTS!

I KNOW WHO YOU ARE-- VADER'S DAUGHTER! I AM TEDRYN-SHA, PALPATINE'S SECOND IN COMMAND!

IF YOU ARE WISE YOU WILL SURRENDER-- THE EMPEROR WANTS YOU ALIVE!

SO HE CAN MAKE DARKSIDERS OF MY CHILDREN? NOT A CHANCE!

ALL RIGHT-- HAVE IT YOUR WAY--

--BOTH OF YOU!

UUNNH! LEIA! I'M HIT!

I'M SENDING YOUR UGLY SPIRIT BACK TO YOUR EMPEROR!

TELL HIM THE DAUGHTER OF ANAKIN SKYWALKER HAS BEATEN HIS PROUDEST WARRIOR!

NYAAAH!

MASTER SKYWALKER!

I SENSE POISON IN YOUR VEINS! VIMA'S HEALING WILL STOP THE POISON!

THIS IS OUR LAST JEDI MASTER... HE MUST LIVE!

OH, JEM... POOR JEM...

SHE'S DYING, VIMA... THE DARKSIDERS HAVE KILLED HER. WE MUST DO SOMETHING--!

EXECUTOR NIST! I'VE LOST CONTACT WITH SHA AND MORDI--THEIR LIFE FORCE HAS VANISHED. THE FOOLS HAVE FAILED US.

THE CHILDREN ARE IN THIS BUILDING, GTHULL. TAKE THEM QUICKLY. THEN WE WILL DESTROY THE SETTLEMENT.

SHRRUUMM!

JEDI!

THREE JEDI--KAM SOLUSAR, RAYF YSANNA, AND BRAND--THROW BACK THE SHADOWS WITH THEIR LIGHTSABERS!

WITHOUT HESITATION, THE DARK JEDI IGNITE THEIR OWN LIGHT-SABERS, AND A FURIOUS BATTLE ENSUES!

ARE YOU READY TO TEST YOUR NEW SKILLS, RAYF?

I'M READY, KAM--LET'S GET 'EM!

HEY! WATCH WHERE YOU SWING THAT THING, RAYF! YOU ALMOST TOOK OFF MY HEAD!

SHR-ZZMM!

USING MULTIPLE PROSTHETIC FIGHTING ARMS, ONE WITH A *BUILT-IN* LIGHTSABER, *EMPATOJAYOS BRAND* IS ABLE TO DOMINATE SEVERAL ADVERSARIES AT ONCE!

FOR *KAM SOLUSAR*, THIS IS A MOMENT OF SWEET *JUSTICE!*

YOU'RE THE EMPEROR'S SO-CALLED "*JEDI*"!

I WAS *ONE* OF YOU... ON VJUN. BUT I DON'T RE-MEMBER *YOU*.

I AM *NIST*, THE EMPEROR'S *EXECUTOR*. I AM *MORE* JEDI THAN YOU, MY FRIEND.

AH... *SEDRISS'* OLD JOB. I WASN'T *HIS* FRIEND AND I'M NOT *YOUR* FRIEND, FRIEND.

KAM MAKES A DEFT FEINT WITH HIS LIGHTSABER AND *XECR NIST* GOES DOWN!

WHO *ELSE* IS WITH YOU?

GTHULL! ALERT THE ARMORED ATTACK! TELL THEM TO STRIKE *NOW!*

ARMOR'S ON ITS WAY, NIST! I GOT THE *JEDI BRATS!*

THEY'VE TAKEN THE TWINS!

LEIAAA!

HEARING THE CHILDREN'S CRIES, *RAYF YSANNA* RUSHES TO HELP!

EASY AS TOSSIN' ROCKS WITH THE *FORCE!*

GOOD WORK, RAYF! I'VE GOT THEM!

RUNNING FROM LUKE'S QUARTERS, THE TWINS' *MOTHER* HAS HEARD THEIR CRIES TOO!

YYUNNH--

THANK YOU, RAYF...

...YOUR *SISTER*... SHE'S BEEN HURT-- *GO* TO HER!

I'M SORRY I DIDN'T HAVE A *WEAPON*, LEIA... BUT THE CHILDREN ARE FINE!

RAYF FINDS *VIMA-DA-BODA* ATTEMPTING A JEDI HEALING.

W-WILL SHE BE ALL RIGHT?

SHE WILL BE... WELL... HER *SPIRIT* GOES ON... TO JOIN THE *GREAT COMPANY* OF JEDI!

MTH SON MAKAO! DON'T DIE, JEM! *DON'T DIE!*

GLIO... SVBAS... RAYF...

GLIO SVBAS, JEM...

WAR HAS *NEVER* BEEN KIND TO THE JEDI. OVER THE CENTURIES, MANY WERE JUST BEGINNING THE JEDI WAY WHEN THEIR SPIRITS PASSED INTO THE LIGHT.

THE ALLIANCE HAS BEEN SMASHED, LUKE SKYWALKER HAS BEEN FELLED, AND ANOTHER JEDI HAS *PASSED ON*.

IT IS A MOMENT OF PROFOUND LOSS... AND *GREAT DANGER*. THE REBELS FEEL FORTUNATE TO HAVE GAINED THE UPPER HAND IN THE ENGAGEMENT AT NEW ALDERAAN...

...UNTIL SUDDENLY, A PHALANX OF *ALL TERRAIN ARMORED TRANSPORTS* APPEARS OUT OF THE MISTS WITH THE INTENTION OF *WIPING OUT* THE REBEL SETTLEMENT!

AS THE SURVIVING *DARKSIDERS* BREAK FOR COVER, HIDDEN HYDRAULICS HUM, AND REBEL *DEFENSE GUNS* EMERGE FROM THEIR SILOS BELOW GROUND.

BUT THE ATTACKERS ARE A NEW GENERATION OF *AT-ATs* EQUIPPED WITH THE *MOST ADVANCED* IMPERIAL TURBOLASERS!

FEEL THE *BLAST HEAT*? THOSE THINGS ARE EMPLOYING THE NEW *X-80 POWER CELLS* WE HEARD ABOUT!

GET *EVERYBODY* OUT OF THE BUILDINGS!

LUKE! THEY'VE GOT *ALL* OUR SHIPS... WE'RE EVACUATING TO THE *CAVES* IN THE HILLS!

C'MON, WE'RE GETTING YOU *OUT* OF HERE!

THEY MASKED THEIR THOUGHTS... I NEVER SENSED THEIR APPROACH!

I LET MY GUARD DOWN... NOW THE EMPEROR HAS LASHED OUT--HE INTENDS TO *FINISH* US.

WITH RELENTLESS FIREPOWER, THE IMPERIAL JUGGERNAUT *ANNIHILATES* THE SETTLEMENT!

C'MON, I'LL *CARRY* YA, OLD WOMAN!

PUT VIMA DOWN! VIMA *STRONG* WITH THE FORCE!

THINGS HAVE NEVER LOOKED MORE *HOPELESS* FOR THE REBELLION... AND THE JEDI.

FORTUNATELY, THE JEDI HAVE *FRIENDS* IN HIGH PLACES!

HNNRRARRN!

GREAT! *WALKERS* ARE TAKIN' APART THE VILLAGE!

AND MY *KIDS* ARE DOWN THERE!

THIS IS *GENERAL CALRISSIAN*...CHECK YOUR COMM-SCREENS... I'M TRANSMITTING *MARKERS* ASSIGNING EACH SHIP A *TARGET!*

TARGET LOCKED IN, LANDO!

HAN AND CHEWBACCA HAVE EVADED IMPERIAL SURVEILLANCE SCANS TO CONTACT LANDO'S TEAM ABOARD THE *THREE SMUGGLER SHIPS*--AND LANDO ALERTED AN *X-WING FLIGHT GROUP* BASED IN A NEARBY SYSTEM!

SORRY, HAN--LOOKS LIKE WE GOT HERE TOO *LATE*--THOSE *AT-ATS* HAVE *WIPED OUT* MOST OF THE VILLAGE!

WE'LL PICK UP THE *SURVIVORS*... IF THERE ARE ANY!

HEY, CHECK IT! I JUST BLEW THE *HEAD* OFF ONE OF THOSE STUPID *WALKERS!*

OH, DEAR--I SEE *PRINCESS LEIA* RUNNING WITH HER CHILDREN...THE IMPERIAL WALKERS WILL *KILL* THEM!

THE MILLENNIUM FALCON'S GANATHAN LIGHTNING GUN WORKS FLAWLESSLY!

THIS IS FOR SHOOTING AT MY WIFE AND KIDS...

...AND THIS IS FOR RUINING MY VACATION!

GET DOWN THERE AND LOAD UP THE VILLAGERS, SALLA!

STARHOOK TEN TOUCHES DOWN AMIDST THE RUINED SETTLEMENT AND THROWS OPEN HER BIG CARGO BAY.

C'MON, VIMA, I GOT YOU!

WE'RE READY, HAN! LET'S BOUNCE OFF THIS ORB BEFORE THE IMPERIAL NAVY SHOWS UP!

EVERYBODY ON BOARD, SALLA?

NNHUUARRN!

THIS IS LANDO-- SHIELDS UP! WE'VE GOT FIRE FROM THE REAR!

EVERYBODY PUNCH IN THE COORDINATES I GAVE YOU?

THE SURVIVING DARK JEDI GIVE CHASE IN THEIR HOWLRUNNERS...

...BUT THE REBELS HAVE TIME ENOUGH TO MAKE THE JUMP TO HYPERSPACE...

...TO THE DISTANT *AURIL* SYSTEMS ...AND A DERELICT *CITY IN SPACE.*

I... *KNOW* THIS PLACE... THE OLD *NESPIS* SPACE-PORT.

YEAH... WHERE YOU AND I HAD OUR FATEFUL *MEETING.*

BUT WHY DID LANDO BRING *US HERE?*

ARE YOU OKAY, LEIA?

I'M... I FEEL MY TIME IS NEAR. WE NEED TO LAND... *SOON.*

PRINCESS LEIA... OH, DEAR... I DON'T KNOW *HOW* YOU HUMANS MANAGE. IT'S SO MUCH *EASIER* TO CREATE A DROID!

BRRT-BEEP-BDEET?

NESPIS VIII... A LABYRINTHINE CITY IN SPACE CONSTRUCTED OVER THOUSANDS OF YEARS ON THE NODE OF THE AURIL SYSTEMS.

ALTHOUGH IT WAS ABANDONED BEFORE THE CLONE WARS, ITS BLADE-LIKE SPIRES AND OBELISKS ARE AMAZINGLY PRESERVED IN THE VACUUM OF SPACE.

THE DISTANT ADEGAN SUNS DANCE BLUE AND COLD AGAINST THE BLAZING COLORS OF THE MIGHTY *CRON DRIFT*... THE REMAINS OF THREE SYSTEMS THAT WENT NOVA 4000 YEARS AGO, DURING THE GREAT *SITH WAR.*

MON MOTHMA! ACKBAR!

WELCOME, MY FRIENDS!

THE JEDI KNIGHTS AND THEIR RESCUERS RECEIVE A JOYFUL SURPRISE--THE LEADERS OF THE REBEL ALLIANCE MANAGED TO *EVACUATE* PINNACLE MOON BEFORE THE EMPEROR'S GALAXY WEAPON DESTROYED IT!

WE'VE SURVIVED... BUT THE *ALLIANCE* HAS BEEN FRAGMENTED AND DRIVEN INTO HIDING.

IT IS A *BAD* TIME FOR US...BUT AT LEAST WE ARE *TOGETHER*.

LEIA... ARE YOU...

YES, MON MOTHMA... WE GOT HERE... *JUST IN TIME*.

I ALERTED THE *DOCTORS*, DEAR--EVERYTHINGS READY.

GOOD... PLEASE DON'T LET THEM START WITHOUT ME!

AS LEIA GOES INTO LABOR, THE OTHER JEDI WAIT FOR NEWS OF A NEW JEDI CHILD.

THIS IS THE VERY ROOM WHERE KAM AND I MET,,,THESE *MURALS* WERE CONSTRUCTED *CENTURIES* AGO,,,

THEY DEPICT THE EXPLOITS OF THE JEDI IN THE *SITH WAR*.

THE JEDI HAVE BEEN STRUGGLING WITH THE DARK SIDE FOR AEONS,,,

SO *MANY* HAVE DIED. AND NOW WE HAVE LOST ANOTHER,,,I WISH I COULD HAVE *SAVED* HER, RAYF.

DON'T BLAME YOURSELF. YOU'VE DONE *GREAT* THINGS, LUKE,,, THE JEDI *ARE* RISING AGAIN, THANKS TO *YOU*.

THAT'S TRUE, RAYF, BUT ONCE AGAIN, *TECHNOLOGY* HAS GOT US BEAT-- THE EMPEROR'S NEW *GALAXY GUN* IS VIRTUALLY INVINCIBLE!

LISTEN,,,WE HAVE EVERY REASON TO BE OPTIMISTIC.

GIVE IN TO THE *DESPAIR* AND YOU GIVE IN TO THE *DARK SIDE!*

BRAND IS RIGHT-- IF WE STAY WITH THE *LIGHT*, WE'LL PULL TO-GETHER,,,

,,,AND THE JEDI WILL GO ON *FOREVER!*

I GUESS I'VE SEEN TOO MUCH *DARK-NESS,,,*

WE'VE MADE ONLY A SMALL BEGINNING,,, THERE'S SO *MUCH* TO DO.

HEY--I'M A *FATHER* AGAIN! IT'S A *BOY!*

FEAST YOUR EYES ON *HAN SOLO, Jr.!* ISN'T HE A *HANDSOME* BOY?

HAN... HIS NAME IS *ANAKIN*. HE WILL BE A GREAT JEDI LIKE HIS GRAND-FATHER.

UH...OKAY. *ANAKIN SOLO*. I *LIKE* THE SOUND OF THAT.

HEY--I'VE GOT A GOOD FEELING ABOUT THIS... WE'RE GOING TO *WIN* THIS ONE, LUKE.

LOOOK.

NEW LIFE... NEW GENERATIONS OF JEDI... THAT'S THE *HOPE* OF THE FUTURE, LUKE.

AS LUKE FEELS THE STRENGTH OF THE FORCE IN LEIA'S NEW CHILD, A VISION OF THE FUTURE UNFOLDS TO HIS MIND'S EYE...

...A VISION OF A TIME WHEN LEIA'S CHILDREN WILL BE GROWN, AND WHEN *MANY* JEDI KNIGHTS WILL GATHER IN STRENGTH TO RESTORE PEACE AND JUSTICE TO THE GALAXY.

FORGIVE ME, LEIA. I HAD A DARK DREAM... THE EMPEROR'S SHADOWY *HAND* WAS STILL ON ME...

BUT NOW I SEE CLEARLY... THE EMPEROR AND HIS EVIL *CANNOT* WITHSTAND THE *LIGHT OF THE JEDI!*

MEDI-UNIT

YOU SEE, ARTOO, THINGS AREN'T SO BAD AFTER ALL... I *KNEW* ALL YOUR FRETTING WAS FOR NOTHING!

BRRT-PWHEET BDWEET BEEEP-VRRRP WHREET BRRBLE-BOOP VRDOOT?

THE END

SON OF ULTRON